



Partnership for Clean Indoor Air

The Partnership for Clean Indoor Air, led by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency was formed at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg to address the increased environmental health risk faced by more than 2 billion people in the developing world who burn traditional biomass fuels indoors for cooking and heating. According to the World Health Organization, their increased exposure results in an estimated 2 million premature deaths each year, largely among women and children. This Partnership is designed to bring together governments, industry and non-governmental organizations to increase the use of affordable, reliable, clean, and efficient home cooking and heating practices. The Partnership for Clean Indoor Air aspires to halving mortality related to indoor air pollution in targeted areas.

The Challenge

Over 2 billion people worldwide use traditional biomass fuels (e.g., wood, dung, crop residues) for cooking and heating. As a result, an estimated 2 million people - particularly women and children - die each year from breathing elevated levels of indoor smoke. These practices are also associated with adverse pregnancies (e.g., stillbirth and low-weight babies) and may increase by 2-6 times a young child's risk of serious respiratory infection. The World Bank has designated this issue as one of the four most critical global environmental problems.

While this issue is easy to solve in any individual case, its dispersed nature makes it enormously complicated to solve on the broader scale. Many governments, NGOs, and other institutions have been working on this issue for decades, with varying degrees of success. Many of the failures in the past have arisen due to the inability of interveners to address either the socio-cultural nature of the problem or the need to support the markets that will truly make solutions sustainable. The broad lesson is that to achieve sustainable progress, the Partnership must tackle this problem not just on technology front, but as a health, economic, and environmental issue as well.

A Committed Response

The Partners are contributing their resources and expertise to implement the goals of the initiative and are working together to:

- a. Obtain formal commitments from, and develop action plans with, key sectors (e.g., health, environmental, energy) in partnering countries before beginning efforts in a given country;
- b. Develop culturally appropriate training and other public outreach materials, educational programs, and awareness campaigns, and adapt economic and planning tools to local settings;
- c. Identify in-country industry - including local entrepreneurs - and other non-governmental partners to participate in planning and implementation activities; and
- d. Identify lessons learned from past efforts and develop performance measures to evaluate past and current activities, and identify successful locally-based implementation strategies.

The Partnership for Clean Indoor Air will initially focus on the 4 core dimensions to the problem:

- ***Social/Behavioral Barriers:*** Develop locally targeted training modules for community and local public health leaders to identify strategies to understand and modify behavior patterns to overcome the cultural barriers regarding use of traditional fuels and stoves.
- ***Market Development:*** Support development of local business models and markets for improved cooking mechanisms, including development of micro-finance and other financial assistance options to develop local businesses and spur investments.



- *Technology Design:* Develop design and performance guidelines or consensus standards for efficient and needs-responsive cooking and heating technologies and ventilation systems.
- *Health Effects Research:* Identify and address priority research needs to improve understanding of exposure and health effects of indoor cooking and heating practices in a variety of settings (e.g., fuel type, stove type, ventilation system).

As part of the development of action plans with partnering countries, the Partnership will identify high-risk regions for pilot implementation. The Partnership will facilitate training of key country actors and help them perform training in the target regions in order to achieve broad local buy-in among key community and business leaders, and develop community-wide programs to address this indoor air pollution issue. The Partnership will also work with local businesses to pilot implementation and financing strategies to support business development.

In the longer-term, the Partnership for Clean Indoor Air will focus on broad expansion of efforts throughout partnering countries. Performance will be evaluated, approaches (outreach modules, business models, and financing mechanisms) refined, and longer-term implementation plans identified. Long-term sustainability through local market and business development will be prioritized. The Partnership will also support the direct exchange within regions of experiences among users/cooks, researchers, entrepreneurs, project implementers, and program directors.

The Partners

The Partnership for Clean Indoor Air is still taking shape, with the inaugural meeting of the Partnership held in conjunction with the 11th meeting of the Commission on Sustainable Development at the United Nations in May, 2003. The list of current Partners includes:

Countries:

Canada, Commission for Central American Development (CCAD, for Costa Rica, Panama, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Honduras, Guatemala, Belize), Italy, Mexico, Mozambique, South Africa, USA

Private Industry:

LPG Association of Southern Africa

NGOs:

Aprovecho Research Center, Colorado State University Engines and Energy Conversion Laboratory, Global Environment and Technology Foundation, Health Effects Institute, HELPS International, Intermediate Technology Development Group, Prolena, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, Shell Foundation, UC/Berkeley's Renewable and Appropriate Energy Lab, Resources for the Future, Trees, Water & People, University of WA, Winrock International

International Organizations:

Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA), UN Environment Programme (UNEP), World Bank, World Health Organization (WHO)

For More Information...and to become a partner, contact:

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